

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Chet Edwards announced that he has secured funding that will expand to access to health care for Johnson County citizens, improve roads, and help Johnson County law enforcement crack down on crime and improve communications technology. The funding was included by Edwards in the final 2010 Appropriations bill, which passed the House today by a vote of 221 to 202 and is expected to pass the Senate and be signed into law this month.

Edwards secured \$380,000 for a new Mobile Medical Unit for Huguley Memorial Medical Center that will serve Johnson County citizens who are unable to access healthcare due to a lack of transportation or adequate financial resources. The unit would provide primary care, flu shots, health screenings, school physicals, and service at first aid stations to citizens and families throughout Johnson County. The current bus is ten years old and nearing the end of its functional life.

Edwards, a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee said, "The Mobile Medical Unit will expand access to quality preventive health care for hard-working Johnson County families. Improving access to flu shots and health screenings prevent serious medical conditions from developing and reduce the numbers of those seeking more expensive care at our emergency rooms."

Ken Finch, President & CEO Huguley Medical Center said, "This is great news. I want to thank Congressman Edwards for the support he is giving to our community. Johnson County will benefit greatly from the new Mobile Medical Unit."

Local law enforcement efforts to slow the spread of illegal drugs in Johnson County under the Stop the Offender Program (STOP) will be funded by the \$200,000 included by Edwards in the bill. STOP is an undercover joint law enforcement effort whose objective is to stop the spread of drugs in Johnson County. When this bill is signed into law this month, Edwards will have secured \$688,000 since 2005 for the STOP program. Over the past year alone, STOP has made nearly 100 arrests and confiscated over \$750,000 in illegal drugs and weapons.

Edwards said, "As the father of two young sons, I am deeply committed to doing everything possible to protect our children from the devastation of illegal drugs. These funds will help our law enforcement officers continue their work to arrest drug dealers, and send a clear message that drug crime will not be tolerated in Johnson County."

Sheriff Bob Alford said, "I greatly appreciate Congressman Edwards and his staff for all the hard work that went into obtaining this funding. We will utilize this funding in a fiscally responsible manner for the purpose of exposing and apprehending those who engage in organized and violent crime as well as those trafficking in illegal narcotics. The Special Crimes Unit of Johnson County has become an essential tool that complements other law enforcement efforts and has proven to have a positive impact on the quality of life of our law abiding citizens."

Adam King, STOP Commander said, "This funding will allow us to continue supporting our local law enforcement agencies with specialized investigative assistance and will allow us to do so in a safe and effective manner. We owe Congressman Edwards and his staff a big 'thank you' for their support."

Edwards also secured \$150,000 to help the Cleburne Police and Fire Departments install a wireless network to improve communications technology and better access critical records. The wireless network can also be used by other city departments. This would allow Patrol Officers to have faster responses to calls, increase the amount of time officers are actually in their vehicles on the streets, and increase officer safety by providing instant access to information.

"I believe we have an obligation to work closely with local law enforcement to protect our families from criminals. This new equipment will help our officers respond more quickly to emergency calls with the information they need to protect our families," said Edwards.

Cleburne Police Chief Terry Powell said, "During these difficult economic times, Congressman Edwards has continued to provide support to our community. The enhanced technology will allow for more efficient police service to the citizens of Cleburne. Officers of the Cleburne Police Department will have faster access to information regarding wanted persons and stolen property, as well as information regarding open calls for service. Faster access to information will allow for more effective policing. This technology will also provide an increased level of safety for our police officers on the streets. We are thankful to Congressman Edwards for all he does for law enforcement and our community."

Edwards also secured \$700,000 to widen Alsbury Blvd. in Burleson which follows \$588,000 in 2007 for the project. This funding would provide for construction of new roadway with underground drainage and sidewalks. This roadway is critical to the success of Burleson's transit station, as it provides direct access from Burleson "proper" to the station, and supports Burleson's effort to create sustainable development in the vicinity of the proposed rail station.

"Improving roads and reducing congestion for Burleson citizens is important for public safety and continued economic growth," said Edwards. "I am pleased Congress approved my request to continue this important transportation project, and I especially want to thank Mayor Ken Shetter and local leaders in Burleson for stressing its importance to the community."

Burleson Mayor Ken Shetter said, "As Burleson's population continues to increase, our challenge will be to develop adequate transportation infrastructure to support sustainable growth. We cannot do it alone, it will take all levels of government working together, so I appreciate Chet's commitment to doing everything he can to help. Chet has championed this project from the start and has made it possible for us to continue make progress even as state transportation dollars become harder and harder to come by. I particularly appreciate that Chet is working hard to ensure that the citizens of his district get back their fair share of transportation dollars that they send to Washington."

Earlier this year, Edwards announced that Chisholm Trail in Johnson County received \$143.9 million from the Economic Recovery Act to construct two key interchanges.